

# MARYLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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## Press Release

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### **Maryland Air National Guard Logs 10,000 Accident-Free Hours in U.S. Air Force's Newest 130J**

**BALTIMORE**, May 6, 2004 – The Maryland Air National Guard's 175<sup>th</sup> Wing today announced that its 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group has surpassed 10,000 flying hours in the U.S. Air Force's newest cargo aircraft, the C-130J Hercules.

In May 1999, the Maryland Air National Guard was selected as the first Air National Guard unit to take delivery of the state-of-the-art aircraft. Since that time, the unit has logged more than 10,000 mishap-free hours maintaining a level of professionalism that spans more than 170,000 flying hours during a period of 45 years.

"I'm extremely proud of the pilots and aircrew who have contributed to this achievement," said Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, the adjutant general, Maryland National Guard. "The Maryland Air National Guard continues to demonstrate the value of its selection by the U.S. Air Force as the first Air National Guard unit to field the C-130J. This is a tremendous aircraft with great potential and we're proud to be playing such a key role in its future."

Relying on advanced computer technology, the C-130J has been significantly enhanced to increase the aircraft's strength and durability. The newer model is more than 20 percent faster, has 40 percent greater range, generates nearly 30 percent more thrust and is 15 percent more fuel-efficient. Additionally, climb time for the newer model has been reduced by 50 percent, while the aircraft's cruising altitude has been increased by 40 percent.

"10,000 hours is a significant milestone for the Maryland Air National Guard, and the 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group in particular," said Col. Guy M. Walsh, commander of the

Maryland Air National Guard's 175<sup>th</sup> Wing. "What makes this even more significant is that the Maryland Air National Guard has not only been qualifying the Air Force's initial cadre of pilots and aircrew, but developing the future tactics and procedures to be followed by the Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard. This is a tremendous accomplishment and one that all Marylander's can take great pride in."

In addition to the enhancements outlined above, the C-130J's advanced avionics and computer technology has been redesigned to allow for improved flight operations, high-tech cargo handling and aircraft maintenance. Though virtually identical in appearance, the C-130J is in essence a completely redesigned aircraft.

The 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group's eight C-130J's are capable of providing worldwide support for a variety of missions including troop and equipment delivery and humanitarian relief.

Throughout its history, the 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group has participated in numerous operations including Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia as well as humanitarian operations in Haiti and Somalia. In 1998, utilizing the C-130 aircraft, the unit responded to the devastation in Honduras and other Central American countries as a result of Hurricane Mitch, as well as Bangladesh to assist with flood-relief activities. Additionally, the 135<sup>th</sup> has supported other total force missions including counter-drug operations throughout Central and South America, and has been directly involved in operations in Libya, Oman and Turkey. To date the 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group has flown missions in more than 80 countries.

The 175<sup>th</sup> Wing is comprised of two flying units and support staff – the 104<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron and the 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group. Nearly 1,700 full-time and traditional members are employed by the Maryland Air National Guard, contributing more than \$98 million per year to Maryland's economy.

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